



GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

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AGENDA ITEM # X-A.

Department of Community and Culture

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HEAT Applicants to See Lower Benefit Payments

SALT LAKE CITY- Due to federal budget cuts to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Home Energy Assistance Target (HEAT) applicants will receive lower average payments beginning March 2, 2011.

In order to serve as many clients as possible, the State HEAT Benefit payment will be reduced from an average of \$510 to an average of \$360 per household.

"More than 50,000 households were provided with HEAT Benefits in 2010 and in today's economic environment we don't anticipate a decrease in the need for this service," said Utah Division of Housing and Community Development director Gordon Walker. "In order to serve as many Utahns as possible it was determined that benefit amounts had to be lowered."

To help Utahns understand the changes to the HEAT program, the Utah Division of Housing and Community Development has developed a fact sheet which contains information on how they can off-set the reduction of their payment.

To qualify for HEAT, a family must earn below 150 percent of the federal poverty level: about \$33,000 for a family of four. Priority for H.E.A.T. assistance is given to households with the highest energy burden in relationship to household income while taking into consideration vulnerable populations such as the elderly, disabled and families with young children.

Utahns are encouraged to visit our website at <http://housing.utah.gov/seal/offices.html> to find their county's contact information, or to dial 2-1-1.

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The H.E.A.T. program is Utah's version of the federal LIHEAP program (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program LIHEAP). It is funded 100% by the Federal Government through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Utah's State Energy Assistance and Lifeline Office is managed by the Utah Division of Housing and Community Development under the Utah Department of Community and Culture.

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Home Energy Assistance Program

Guide for Changes in Benefits

LIHEAP Federal Budget Cuts:

Nationwide the LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) funding will be reduced from a little over \$5 billion to just \$2.5 billion.

State of Utah HEAT Budget Cuts:

Utah's portion will be between \$14 million and \$17 million compared to \$30.1 million this year, cutting our budget in half.

Importance of funding:

For the first time in 30 years the HEAT Program surpassed 50,000 households in assisted mark in 2010. 52,313 households applied and 50,099 were approved for HEAT assistance.

What this Means for You:

In order to serve as many clients as possible, the State HEAT Benefit payment will be reduced on March 2, 2011 from an average of \$510 to an average of \$360 per household. Your benefits will be less.

For Additional Information:

To Contact your local HEAT office, call 2-1-1.

For information on energy efficiency improvements, call 2-1-1 or (801) 538-4798 or (801) 538-8815.

Visit our website at:
<http://housing.utah.gov/seal>

How Clients Can Off-Set the Reduction of their Payment:

1. Make every effort to pay your full gas and electric bills each month.
2. Be aggressive about energy use in your home by following these tips which can save 10 to 20 % on your utility bills.
 - Change your furnace filter every 2-3 months.
 - Use compact fluorescent bulbs.
 - Use a microwave instead of a stove.
 - Buy ENERGY STAR appliances and equipment.
 - Set water heaters at 110 degrees.
 - Install low-flow shower heads.
 - Turn off lights, computers, monitors and TVs when not in use.

It takes less energy to reheat or re-cool your home when you get home than to leave it running while you are gone.

Winter Tips

- Set thermostat to 68-72 degrees.
- Set thermostat to 55 degrees when gone.
- Open blinds to let in the sun.
- Close blinds at night to keep the heat in.
- Wear warm clothes.

Summer Tips

- Set air conditioner to 78-82 degrees.
- Set air conditioner to 85 degrees when gone.
- Turn off air conditioner and open windows at night to let cool air in.